

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please insert the following “Summary of the Invention” on page 9 of the specification prior to the “Brief Description of the Drawings”:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a process for the catalytic hydrotreatment of heavy hydrocarbons of petroleum with a high content of contaminants (metals and asphaltenes), which operates in operating conditions with low-pressure, in combination with the type of reactor and the type of feedstock, which together limit the formation of sediments and sludge in the product and obtain a hydrotreated hydrocarbon of improved properties, with levels of contaminants, API gravity and distillates within the ranges commonly reported in the feedstocks typical to refining schemes.

More particularly, the present invention comprises the stages of: I) feeding the heavy hydrocarbons of petroleum to a fixed or ebullated-bed reactor packed with a hydrotreatment catalyst, whose principal effect is the hydrodemetallization and the hydrocracking of asphaltenes of the heavy hydrocarbons of petroleum, and, II) feeding the heavy hydrocarbon of petroleum hydrotreated in stage I to a fixed or ebullated-bed reactor with a hydrotreatment catalyst, for a deeper effect of hydrodesulfurization of the heavy hydrocarbon of petroleum, whose content of total sulfur is reduced to a level required for its treatment in the conventional refining process or for its sale as a hydrocarbon of petroleum with improved properties.